

National Public Health Week to focus on aging: 2005 celebration will target health of older Americans

Healthy aging will be the focus of National Public Health Week 2005, which will have a theme of “Empowering Americans to Live Stronger, Longer.”

The annual APHA-sponsored observance, which will take place April 4–10, 2005, will promote the three “Ps” for adding more healthy years to a person’s life: prevent, protect and plan. During the week, APHA and its partners throughout the nation will teach the public how to prevent health problems by practicing healthy living, protect their health through early detection and screening and plan their health management in a way that will promote a high quality of life in later years.

Last year, hundreds of organizations, including state and local health departments, took part in National Public Health Week through events such as health fairs, educational events, free health screenings and much more. For the 2005 observance, activities can focus on issues such as how older Americans can prevent fall-related injuries, increase their physical activity and better their diet. Although many outreach activities will be targeted at Americans ages 65 or older, event organizers also hope to target those who care for aging family members.

Other upcoming National Public Health Week events will include advocacy efforts aimed at encouraging local and national policy-makers to support programs that make healthy aging easier and enable people to follow the three Ps. Additional objectives of the observance are to encourage Americans older than 65 to get a health risk assessment, raise general awareness about taking preventive action and encourage family members of older Americans to assist their relatives in following the three Ps.

Materials related to the new National Public Health Week theme will be available via the APHA Web site in early 2005. Downloadable materials will include a toolkit and aging resources.

Among the aging resources will be information on the new “You Can! Steps to Healthier Aging” campaign, which is being organized by the U.S. Administration on Aging. The new campaign, which APHA is partnering on, aims to promote healthier lifestyles for older Americans through increased physical activity and better food choices. The national initiative has already had hundreds of organizations sign up as partners. AoA is providing free toolkits to organizations that want to participate in the campaign.

For more information on the AoA campaign, visit <www.aoa.gov/youcan>. For more on National Public Health Week, call (202) 777-2515 or visit <www.nphw.org>.